clear=all style='page-break-before:always'> **16.48Â½ hrs.**

Title: Need to popularize micro-credit at the village level for the benefit of farmers and other weaker sections of the society -Laid.

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO (GUNTUR): Sir, as we are well aware, Mohammad Yunus of Bangladesh won Nobel Prize some years back for popularizing micro-credit in his country. It has helped the farmers to stand on their own legs and not depend on any commercial banks or moneylenders. It was a successful experiment.

Ministry of Finance must ponder over popularizing microcredit at the village level so that farmers are not forced to seek loans from greedy moneylenders, nationalized banks, regional rural banks and cooperatives where the rate of interest is exorbitantly high. When India is celebrating 60th year of Independence, we should not be a witness to farmers committing suicides in the country. The Ministry of Finance should initiate urgent and emergent steps to help start institutions of microcredit, particularly in rural and remote villages of the country, where farmers are going in for loans high on interest. This would^ undoubtedly, go a long way in bringing down abject poverty which would put a stop to farmers from committing suicide.

I hope the Hon'ble Finance Minister would make earnest efforts in this direction keeping in view the sufferings of downtrodden people, poorest of people, landless labourers, poor farmers, petty shop owners, those who want to start a small business and take steps to help the poor to come out of poverty, stop poor from taking loans at exorbitant rate of interest and to lead a honourable and decent life.

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*Treated as laid on the Table.